



the CommonHealth Compass

CommonHealth Challenges You to Maintain, Don't Gain!

This holiday season, the only thing that should be “stuffed” is the turkey. Many Americans gain between 1 and 5 pounds each holiday season. While it might not sound like much, most people never manage to lose those extra pounds. You are invited to join CommonHealth as we Maintain, Don't Gain this holiday season!

The challenge will run through the New Year on January 3. You simply weigh in at the beginning and ending of the challenge. CommonHealth will be with you throughout your challenge, and you will receive weekly “touch points” offering education, encouragement, and motivation. Your agency coordinator will be forwarding information to you about online registration. Employees completing the challenge will get our infamous Ginny B Well in a special commemorative lapel pin. Let's finish out the year together on a healthy note!



RECIPE

African-Style Pumpkin and Peanut Stew



Pumpkin and groundnuts (peanuts), with their beta carotene and protein, respectively, are staples in many West African kitchens. Prepared with fragrant spices, their flavors blend to create a hearty, healthy and flavorful stew. Try this vegetarian stew over cooked rice or quinoa.

Ingredients

- 1 medium yellow onion, cut in ¼-inch dice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons minced peeled ginger root, or 2 teaspoons powdered ginger
- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 3 cups low sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 (15-ounce) can solid pack pumpkin
- 2 medium sweet apples (e.g. Gala, Honey Crisp), cut in ½-inch dice
- 2 medium carrots, cut in ¼-inch rounds
- 2 medium red potatoes, cut in ½-inch dice
- 1 large stalk celery, cut in ½-inch dice
- ¾ cup chunky reduced-fat or regular peanut butter
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon hot sauce

- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Crushed peanuts or pumpkin seeds, for garnish
- Chopped herbs (cilantro, parsley, or chives), for garnish

Directions

1. Heat the oil in a large non-stick saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic; cook and stir for about 5 minutes, until the onion is softened. Remove from the heat. Stir in the ginger root, brown sugar, cinnamon and curry powder, allowing them to blend for a fragrant aroma.
2. Add the broth and pumpkin; blend well. Mix in the apples, carrots, potatoes and celery. Reduce the heat to simmer; cover and simmer for about 25 minutes, until the vegetables and apples are tender.
3. Remove from the heat; cool slightly. Stir in the peanut butter. Season with hot sauce, salt and pepper.
4. To serve, garnish with crushed peanuts or pumpkin seeds and herbs.

Nutritional Information

Serving size: 1 cup

Serves: 8

Calories: 270; Calories from fat: 100; Total fat: 11g; Saturated fat: 2g; Trans fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 0mg; Sodium: 250mg; Total carbohydrate: 37g; Dietary fiber: 7g; Sugars: 14g; Protein: 9g

Recipe From: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Roberta Duyff, MS, RD, FAND. <https://www.eatright.org/food/planning-and-prep/recipes/african-style-pumpkin-and-peanut-stew>



Employees attending a CommonHealth program and officially dedicating the CommonHealth Room.



Practicing Mindfulness at the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

In September, the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Tidewater Regional Office officially opened its CommonHealth Room in conjunction with National Day of Encouragement and National Mindfulness Day.

Research suggests that today's office spaces are filled with numerous distractions, interruptions and sometimes chaotic work environments resulting in a decrease in employee productivity and an increase in stress. It is common to hear staff say that they could use a little privacy, quiet, or a moment to reflect. To help promote employee health and productivity, this DEQ office dedicated a private office space as their very own CommonHealth Room.

The room can be reserved in 15-minute intervals and is meant to provide staff a private, distraction free area. Using the space also allows individuals to be more considerate to their peers when they need to conduct a few minutes of personal business.

Studies show that the room may also promote positive physical and mental health. Studies illustrate that staff who participate in activities such as yoga, meditation or silent contemplation are less stressed and therefore miss less work and become happier and more productive.

Here is some positive feedback from DEQ employees at this office:

"I love going to the CommonHealth room, after sitting at the front desk for long periods. It is very refreshing. There I relax my mind, and do my leg strengthening routines. I take 5 minutes rolling around on the exercise balls. I absolutely love it! I am happy that our management promotes, and participates in the well-being of our office staff. Thank you" – Dearvon

"A co-worker and I use the space to do a 10-minute work-out in the mornings before work starts as a way to jump start our work day. I am very thankful that our management has provided a mindful space for employee use." – LeAnn

So if you want to promote creativity, higher levels of morale, healthier staff and more productive employees you may want to consider the creation of a CommonHealth Room.

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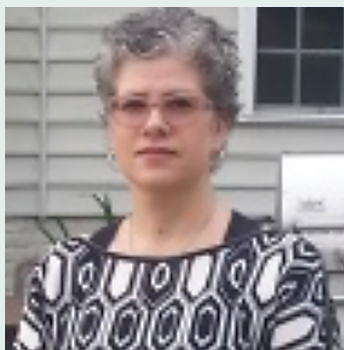
What Does Being Well at Work Mean to You?

2018 CommonHealth Wellness Champs Share Their Personal Stories



Leslie Bobb - Executive Assistant
Department of Internal Medicine
Virginia Commonwealth University

Being well at work is all about realizing that your health is your responsibility and you have the power to make a difference. Bringing our workplace in line with the mission of the VCUHS, School of Medicine, and Department of Internal Medicine to promote health is my way of fighting the epidemics of disease and unhappiness our culture is experiencing today. CommonHealth helps me shift the office culture to one that supports wellness for all team members by providing information, support, and tips to make wellness the norm.



Paula Blamer
Virginia State Police Fairfax

Every small change and every tiny step moves you forward to better health. Always take advantage of your daily work breaks, and move around the office/building – break up with that cubicle!! Make exercise fun - I am not a gym person, I would rather be playing out in the yard with my grandkids and dogs than be inside – jump roping is not just for kids anymore!! And always remember, that no matter how bad you think you may have blown your diet or exercise today – tomorrow is always a new day to begin again.



Jeanette V. Ciccarello
Business and Economic Development Navigator – Trade
Virginia Employment Commission – Lynchburg

For me, being “well at work” means basically being well in life! Wellness and fitness is a chosen attitude and goal throughout the day, which includes what you eat, how you think and your level of activity. I go to the gym twice a week after work and find that classes provide the physical intensity and group encouragement for me to feel fit and energized. I served as team captain for office participation in various Live Healthy Lynchburg and CommonHealth of VA health challenges which encourage all to increase their activity level and have fun in doing so. The CommonHealth newsletters are very informative and the challenges offer health conscious activities that most can do at any fitness level.